

AGENDA



Thursday, October 23, 2008

**Police
RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL ACTION****Item No. 26**

Subject: Approve an ordinance authorizing the acceptance of \$1,110,000 in renewal grant funds from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women, Fiscal Year 2008 Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies and Enforcement of Protection Orders grant program; and amending the Fiscal Year 2008 - 2009 Police Department Operating Budget Special Revenue Fund of Ordinance No. 20080908-002 to appropriate \$1,110,000 for the Austin/Travis County Family Violence Protection Team.

Amount and Source of Funding: This is the second supplemental budget award for this grant. With the addition of the \$1,110,000, a total of \$2,549,466 is available from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women for the project period of October 1, 2004 to September 30, 2010 under the current grant award. No match is required.

Fiscal Note: A fiscal note is attached.

For More Information: David Carter, Chief of Staff/974-6866

Prior Council Action: March 4, 2004, Initial grant application approval
September 13, 2004, Budget appropriation, initial award
September 10, 2007, Budget appropriation, supplemental award number 1

This action will approve an ordinance authorizing the acceptance of \$1,110,000 in renewal grant funds from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women; and will amend the Fiscal Year 2008 - 2009 Police Department Operating Budget Special Revenue Fund of Ordinance No. 20080908-002 to appropriate \$1,110,000 for the Austin/Travis County Family Violence Protection Team.

The City of Austin is a founding member of the Austin/Travis County Family Violence Protection Team ("FVPT"). The FVPT, established in 1997, is composed of five government and three non-profit agencies that are located in and offer services to victims in the jurisdictions of both the City of Austin and Travis County. The Team supports victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking through every aspect of their case, from initial contact, hospital stays, and the filing of Emergency Protective Orders, to follow-up counseling, shelter, and long-term safety planning. Team members include the Travis County and District Attorney's Offices, the Travis County Sheriff's Office, SafePlace, the Austin Police Department, Texas RioGrande Legal Aid, the Texas Advocacy Project, and the Travis County Constable Precinct 5.

The goals and objectives of the Austin/Travis County Family Violence Protection Team have been consistent throughout the Team's ten years of official operation: to empower victims to lead successful, violence-free lives; to improve access to law enforcement, counseling, crisis management, and legal services for victims of family violence; to increase batterer accountability; and, to lead the community's zero tolerance policy toward family violence.

This supplemental grant funding will allow the FVPT to 1) perform current activities at a heightened level, in effect increasing both the number of training sessions provided to rural and regional agencies that have not yet adopted mandatory or pro-arrest policies and the number of training sessions conducted for the judiciary of city, county, and district courts of law; 2) increase the capacity of FVPT victim services with

the addition of two full-time victim counselors; and, 3) provide overtime funding for Travis County Constables, the newest members of the Team. The FVPT feels that taking on the additional responsibilities of these four steps is vital to filling the current gaps in service, to curbing the increase in the targeted crime group, and to truly helping each victim.

Funding will be allocated as follows through 09/30/2010: Austin Police Department, existing victim counselor position (\$110,000); Travis County: Sheriffs Office victim counselor (\$85,203) and detective (\$128,291); District Attorney's Office part-time Assistant DA (\$130,418); County Attorney's Office, full time assistant county attorney (\$200,768) and part time assistant county attorney (\$103,802); Constable Precinct 5, overtime (\$37,104); SafePlace, part-time project coordinator (\$51,287); Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid, part-time attorney (\$79,307) and part-time paralegal (\$59,856); and, Texas Advocacy Project, part-time attorney (\$93,964). The award also includes \$30,000 for training purposes.

All department grant application requests are reviewed by the Budget Office prior to the submission to ensure that the grant minimizes the financial impact to the City.